

# Nicaragua alumni

## Alumni Spotlight

### Millennium Challenge Account Gender Director

*Sylvia R. Torres, Fulbright Visiting Scholar Alumna*



Sylvia Ruth Torres was the Millennium Challenge Account's Gender Director for Nicaragua (MCA-N) for five years, from 2006-2011. Sylvia continues her work with the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) today, even though MCC formally closed its operations in Nicaragua in May 2011. She continues to share her knowledge about gender integration in the Nicaragua context with new audiences.

During her tenure in MCA-N, the program achieved its goal to integrate female clients in 30% of the rural business projects, and obtained 10% female employment in road construction projects. As a result of this endeavor, MCA-N won an award by the international NGO Women Thrive Worldwide (WTW). While at MCA-N, Sylvia's two case studies on integration of gender in the value chain received cash awards and are published in the Gender and Agriculture Sourcebook of the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Another case study on women's economic empowerment is being published by Agriprofocus. In her capacity as Gender Director, Sylvia coordinated with the Seed program, sponsored by John Hopkins University and USAID, to enable 30 young men and women to be trained as rural

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–Humphrey alumnus in Macedonia used the journal database when writing a book on public health



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technicians in community colleges in the United States.

Sylvia has an university degree in Social Sciences from the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua (UNAN). She is also a Fulbright Alumna (1994), having completed studies and exams for a Ph.D. in cultural anthropology at the University of Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania.

Since the age of fourteen,

Sylvia has been an active community organizer. Working on rural issues in the 1980s, she helped to create two of the current national rural organizations, Rural Workers Association (ATC) and Rural National Union of Farmers (UNAG), as well as an important women's organization, The Western Council of Women, (CMO).

From 1987 to 1994, she worked as a national news cor-

respondent and "Buzón Popular" chief of the Nicaraguan national newspaper *Barricada*. Since 1998, she has served as the national correspondent of the women's news agency SEMLac.

As her voluntary contribution to society, she has been part of the women's movement, co-founding the Feminist Group of Leon (GFL) in 2000, which has a youth, university and rural base, and includes both male and female members.

## What's going on...

### Recent Alumni News

#### \* ***SIT Alumna offers training to her peers at the American Corner Nicaragua***

Sonia Ardila Gutierrez, an SIT Alumna and English teacher at CCNN in Nicaragua, presented a workshop for English Teachers on "Skills and Principles of Language Teacher Training" at the American Corner. This workshop was attended by 5 English teachers from public schools. The themes covered included: Adult Learning Theory, The Reflective Cycle and The Experiential Learning Cycle.



#### \* ***Congrats Miguel Campos!***

Miguel Campos, UGRAD Alumnus, has been accepted for a full scholarship for one year in Taiwan to study the language (MOFA HES). And how wonderfully small the world is, he bumped into another ex UGRADER who also won the same scholarship. They will be studying together. We wish you the best!

#### \* ***Fulbright Alumnus working hard!***

Fulbright Alumnus, Rolando Tellez, has published two more books highlighting the importance of English in the globalization process. They are practical and functional dictionaries for Nicaraguan and foreign lawyers: "Bilingual Legal Terminology Dictionary" and "English for Lawyers"



# National Hispanic Heritage Month

## (September 15-October 15)



*David Alcantara came to the United States from Honduras in 1969. He has been practicing law in Atlantic City, New Jersey, for 21 years and is president of his NAACP chapter.*

*Washington* — More Hispanics are assuming leadership positions in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), whose mission of civil rights advocacy stretches back over a century. Chapters of the organization in New Jersey, Connecticut and Georgia have recently elected Hispanic presidents.

Although the NAACP is usually associated with its work on behalf of black Americans, its charter envisions a broader mission: “to promote equality of rights and to eradicate caste or race prejudice among the citizens of the United States.”

The group’s leadership has been multiracial for most of its history. Its founders in 1909 were a diverse group that included, among others, W.E.B. Du Bois, a black historian and activist; Henry Moskowitz, a Romanian Jewish immigrant; and Mary White Ovington, a white social activist.

In December 2010 David Alcantara, who came to the United States from Honduras as a child, was elected president of his NAACP chapter in New Jersey. The chapter is 95 percent black, with the other 5 percent comprising Hispanics, Asians and whites.

Alcantara practices law in Atlantic City, New Jersey. He feels that he and other non-black minorities have benefitted from the work done

by the majority-black membership of the NAACP, and he sought a leadership position in order to join in that work.

“I have said to my members, ‘We minorities also have an obligation not only to be proud of our country, but to respect both the laws and the rights of other groups, whether they’re minorities or not,’” Alcantara said.

“When the black [membership of the NAACP] fight for these rights and they get them with their blood, we just simply benefit from it. We’ve got to help them help us. Because when they get it right, they don’t just get it for themselves, they get it for all of us.”

The Greater Waterbury, Connecticut, chapter elected Victor Diaz — who is of Dominican descent — as its president in December 2010.

Diaz became involved with the NAACP several years earlier when he was invited to a meeting. “I noticed that we are facing the same issues, but nobody was really linking those two communities together and addressing the issues together,” he told National Public Radio. “More people are going to be able to see what this organization does and open the doors for more individuals ... whatever color, instead of just thinking that NAACP is for a specific group or for another group.”

(for more information read on at <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/article/2011/09/20110919164609kram0.1355554.html#axzz1ZNIRtHek>)

### On Line Resources

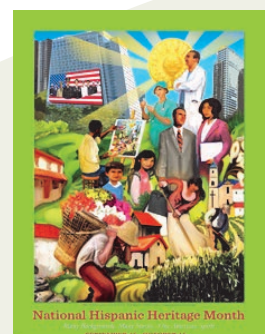
[Obama’s Proclamation on National Hispanic Heritage Month 2011](#)

[Obama Administration Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month](#)

[Renewing the American Dream](#)

[Notable Hispanic Athletes](#)

[Prominent Hispanics in the Arts](#)





# Photo Gallery



Fulbrighters 2011, with former Ambassador Robert J. Callahan











UGRADER, Julia Morales and Fulbrighter Leda Chavarria at ExpoEduca 2011



U.S. Youth Ambassadors 2011 during their visit to the U.S. Embassy

## Calendar of Activities

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2	3  Dialogue with Young African Leaders .Oct. 4, 2011 at 08:30 EDT (12:30 GMT) <a href="https://statedept.connectsolutions.com/conxchannel">https://statedept.connectsolutions.com/conxchannel</a>	4	5  Community Policing Speaker, October 5-9, 2011	6	7	8
9	10  Embassy Closed Renewable Energy Sources Speaker, Oct. 10-14, 2011	11	12  "Hispanics in U.S. Culture" by Jon Jensen at CCNN at 6:30 pm Oct. 12, 2011	13 Panel of Former Fulbright Scholars at CCNN at 5 pm Oct. 13, 2011	14 	15
16	17  APEC Women's Entrepreneurship Summit. Oct. 17, 2011 from 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. EDT <a href="https://statedept.connectsolutions.com/apec">https://statedept.connectsolutions.com/apec</a>	18	19	20	21  Fico Feria Internacional de Cultura y Fiesta At UCA all day Movies, dances and more	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30  Starting Oct. 5, 2011 Free Webinar Series for EL Teachers Join us in these interactive webinar workshops to exchange ideas on how to use these teaching strategies. Important: confirm your attendance by Oct. 4, 2011 to Mirna Cisneros at: 22 52 71 00 Ext. 7609, or E-mail: CisnerosMA@state.gov by providing your: Name, email, phone, workplace						

**We want to hear from you!**

This is your newsletter, we welcome suggestions and questions. Write to our office to include your articles, your efforts, your photos...

Contact  
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**HAPPENING NOW!**

⇒ Free Webinar Series for EL Teachers

OCTOBER 4, 2011

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OCTOBER 2011

⇒ Photo Contest AFRICAN LEGACY IN NICARAGUA

Deadline: November 4

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